



CBC Newsletter

for members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., ornithological society of the Carolinas

Volume 47

October/November 2001

Number 5

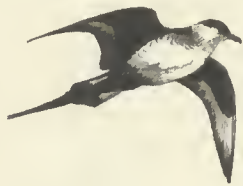
Out to the Banks in January

The Carolina Bird Club will return to Nag's Head, NC for its Winter Meeting in 2002 – January 25, 26 and 27. Headquarters will be at the Comfort Inn Oceanfront South [803] Old Oregon Inlet Road; phone (252) 331-6315 or 1-800-334-3302] Rates: double occupancy bayside \$45.95 and double occupancy oceanfront \$59.95 plus 10% tax which includes deluxe continental breakfast.

Field trips are currently being planned and will be reported in the next Newsletter. A variety of waterbirds (gulls, alcids, waterfowl, etc.) will surely be possible. On Friday our trips will take place mainly west of the Outer Banks for folks en route to Nag's Head. Participants on Saturday will have a wide variety of trips in both brackish and saltwater habitats to choose from. Expect to see many grebes, geese, ducks, herons, gulls and terns. However a number of sparrows, such as Saltmarsh and Nelson's and other unusual Passerines, like Ash-throated Flycatcher are not impossible. Sunday will also offer a unique opportunity to visit Audubon's Pine Island Sanctuary.

For those interested in going offshore, Brian Patteson has scheduled a trip from Hatteras at the reduced rate of \$90. At this time of year the participants might expect Northern Fulmar, Manx Shearwater, Red Phalarope, Great Skua, Black-legged Kittiwake, Dovekie, Razorbill, and Atlantic Puffin. There is also a good chance for rare gulls like Little, Glaucous, and Iceland. The trip is scheduled for Saturday with an obligatory Sunday weather date. To register for this trip contact Brian Patteson at PO Box 772, Hatteras, NC 27943; (252) 986-1363; Brian@Patteson.com.

You can expect good birding and good evening programs at the Nag's Head Winter Meeting 2002. Mark your calendars now for January 25-27 and watch for details in the next newsletter and on the Carolina Bird Club website.



CBC Need You!

Do you have a favorite place to bird? Do others know about it? Especially birders from other parts of the Carolinas? Well here is your chance to show off that special place by sharing it with other birders near and far.

Carolina Bird Club is looking for those special places and people who would lead trips to them. CBC tries to take us to the major birding areas

Continued on page 4

Winter Pelagic Trip on the Miss Hatteras Jan. 26(27), 2002.

Price for CBC members is \$90, Open to non-members after Dec. 1 at \$100/person. All Day Trip. Meeting Time is 0630 at Oden's Dock in Hatteras Village. Participants will need to provide their own food and drink.

Pelagic birds that we might see includes Northern Fulmar, Manx Shearwater, Red Phalarope, Great Skua, Black-legged Kittiwake, Dovekie, Razorbill, and Atlantic Puffin. Other species that we've seen in January or early February include Yellow-nosed Albatross, Black-capped Petrel, Greater, Sooty, and Audubon's Shearwaters, Parasitic Jaeger, and Common Murre. There is also a good chance for rare gulls like Little, Glaucous, and Iceland. Participants should dress warmly and be prepared for spray. This trip is scheduled for Saturday with an obligatory Sunday weather date. experienced leaders will be aboard, and plenty of chum will be on hand to bring birds in close. Expect Northern Gannets just a few feet astern. If you've never HEARD a gannet, you will on this trip!

To register for this trip contact Brian Patteson at PO Box 772, Hatteras, NC 27943; (252) 986-1363; Brian@Patteson.com. To find out more about pelagic trips visit <http://www.patteson.com/>

Leave those hummingbird feeders up!

Although most of our Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have headed south for the winter, why not leave a feeder up to attract a winter hummingbird this year? Eight species of hummers have been documented throughout North and South Carolina in the non-breeding season, mainly in the winter months (November through February). These birds have been seen at feeders from the Appalachians to the coast. And although it is not as rare a phenomenon as we originally thought, it is still unusual. Maintaining a hummingbird feeder through the colder months can only help these overwintering birds. Interestingly, these hummers often turn out to be western species (like Rufous and Black-chinned), not simply our native Ruby-throateds. So keep a feeder up where you can easily monitor it and let our local hummingbird researcher Susan Campbell know if you succeed in attracting a visitor after November 1. Through the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, she is involved with identifying and documenting winter hummingbirds in the area. Susan can be reached at ncaves@utinet.net or (910) 949-3207.

Let me know right away if you have any questions. I will be out banding in the AM but should have my cell phone along and turned on (910-690-5396).



Wings Over Water November 2-4, 2001

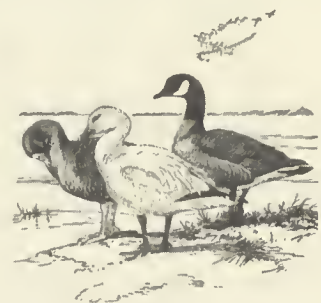
Wings Over Water is a premier wildlife and birding event held annually on North Carolina's Outer Banks the first weekend of November. wildlife and birding event held annually on North Carolina's Outer Banks the first weekend of November. Speakers and field trip leaders assemble from all over the country to share their knowledge about the unique ecosystem found along the North Carolina coastline.

Programs and events range from nature hikes to serious birding lectures, pelagic trips, bear watches, owl prowls, kayak trips, photography sessions and more. There's something for everyone during this extended weekend celebration sponsored by Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, County of Dare, National Park Service, Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

This year's keynote speakers are Don & Lillian Stokes, hosts and creators of Stokes Birds At Home, author of bestsellers Stokes Field Guide to Birds, Stokes Beginner's Guide to Birds, Stokes Birdfeeder Book, Stokes Hummingbird Book, and Stokes Bird Gardening Book. They also produce bird song CDs and cassettes such as Stokes Field Guide to Bird Songs: Eastern Region, and Stokes Field Guide to Bird Songs: Western Region.

A basic registration to Wings Over Water includes free admission to Roanoke Island Festival Park, Elizabethan Gardens, North Carolina Aquarium, Wright Brothers National Monument,) Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, and the Frisco Native American Museum.

We Hope You'll Join Us November 2-4, 2001. To request a registration packet, call 252-441-8144 or visit our web site: www.northeast-nc.com



Pelagic trips from Hatteras on October 13 and November 3, 2001

These should be good trips for Black-capped Petrels and most of the shearwaters plus a chance for some cold water species like kittiwake, fulmar, Red Phalarope, and Manx Shearwater, which have also made a good showing this summer. October is when the White-chinned Petrel was seen from a squid boat off the Outer Banks, and these times are largely un-birded offshore, so we look at these dates as exploratory trips. I should also mention that the Miss Hatteras is being re-powered as I write this and should pick up an additional 400 horsepower in the process. She won't be as fast as the Country Girl, but she won't be far behind. These trips are each \$90/person.

To register for trips contact Brian Patteson at PO Box 772, Hatteras, NC 27943; (252) 986-1363; Brian@Patteson.com. To find out more about pelagic trips visit <http://www.patteson.com/>

Birding Northern Italy

by Pete Worthington

When we think of Italy and birds, thoughts are generally gastronomic. They eat thrushes and robins don't they? Well, yes, some still do, but in the ten years since Betty and I last visited Italy, a sea of change, almost a tidal wave has occurred in conservation. The country now has a chain of refuges dotted across the landscape, not only in the North, but also down the Apennines and on the major islands. Some of the smaller islands are entirely given over to reserves, as they call their refuges. These properties are publicly owned, mostly with decent funding, but under the care of the LIPU [Italian League for the Protection of Birds], which is akin to what Audubon used to be. They have also expanded and/or created entirely new National parks. These changes are aimed primarily at ecotourism and birding in particular.

A word about why we were in Italy. I lived in Milan from 4-14 years of age in the 1930s and it was in Italy that I first started taking notice of birds and their diversity. The visit was primarily to see my cousin in Como and my step-father's niece in Ferrara. Birding, though hardly secondary, shared the spotlight with an ever-increasing ring of 'kissing cousins'.

Our headquarters on a mountainside above Lake Como was quite birdy. The morning wake-up call was provided by Chaffinches and Black-birds. Up to five species of tits [Great, Blue, coal, Marsh and Crested] appeared during breakfast. On the lawn were flitting Spotted and Collared Flycatchers, White Wagtails wagging and a pair of Cirtill Finches. Overhead were swifts [Common, Alpine and even a pair of Pallid, somewhat east of their normal range], Barn Swallows, House Martins, and patrolling Carrion Crows, Buzzards and Black Kites. Down on the lake were Mute Swans

with their broods. One morning there was a raft of nine Ruddy ducks, which seem to be doing to Europe what Starlings have done here.

Very nice, but the best was yet to come. When we went down to visit in Ferrera, my relative arranged a visit into the Po Delta National Park with one of her grand-daughters and a birder friend as guides. The guides outdid them-selves! The park consists of a mixture of 'reclaimed' [i.e. drained] fresh water marshes which have been under intensive cultivation for several centuries, large fresh water marshes where mariculture is practiced, abandoned salt works, some salt marshes, and one or two islands that we would call hammocks with deciduous trees. Part of the area is well below sea level and the whole system is dependent on a series of ancient dykes and canals with lift pumps to raise the effluent to the level of the Adriatic Sea.

On the drive from Ferrara to the park we passed a number of large farms with Magpies, Hooded Crows, a couple of Kestrels hovering, Corn Buntings on the wires, and Swallows and House Martins everywhere. Near the coast we turned onto a secondary road, then a country lane and then the real fun began.

First came a Nightingale with a snatch of song giving us just enough of a view to identify it. This brought two Melodious Warblers out of the bushes proclaiming their territories on each side of the road. Then we came in sight of the old salt pans with possibly 100 Black-winged Stilts and 50 Pied Avocets. Some of the birds were within 30 feet and totally unconcerned. Along the margins there were 5 or so common Redshanks accompanied by a Yellow Wagtail of the Italian racee. As I was enjoying the sight one of the guides called out "fenicotteri" [Greater Flamingoes]. There were maybe 30-

40 nesting. The flamingos have only recently returned to the delta after being absent since the mid-eighteen hundreds. With the flamingoes was a large colony of Mediterranean Gulls with some Slender-billed and Yellow-legged Gulls mixed in. As we moved around the pan to get closer two pairs of Common Shelducks came into view. The male was probably 50% heavier than the female.

About this time a pair of British birders, the only other people we saw all day, told us they had spotted Bee-eaters across a drainage canal. The colors of these birds are incredible with electric blue chests, burnt orange backs, and a palette of other colors scattered about their bodies. These birds are about the size as a Belted Kingfisher.

Walking back to the car we spotted a *beccamoschino*, which is related to the warblers but has an utterly ridiculous English name – Zitting Cisticola. We saw several later with their wings beating rapidly and their tails spread to show the white spots. A single Turtle-dove was by the car as we got in to move to the next hot spot. We had 8 lifers recorded by 9 AM.

The next stop was Valle Mandriola, a shallow lake of several hundred acres with emergent vegetation and a 10-meter high viewing tower at its south end. Again the show was great. We immediately saw several Garganeys mixed in with Little and Great Crested Grebes, two Spoonbills, twenty or so Pygmy cormorants (this is the only spot in Italy for this balcan bird), a Little Bittern, three Black-crowned Night-herons, a very shy Water Rail (sounded just like a Clapper), and a Great Reed-warbler. Six more lifers! Most of the water birds had broods following them.

Continued on page 4

Italy – Continued

Moving down to one of the wooded islands, Punta Alberete, we were led to a blind from which we could observe two male and a female Ferruginous Pochard with nine ducklings. This is a species of special concern. The two small colonies in Italy, here and at a LIPU reserve west of Milan, are the westernmost sites in Europe. The site also yielded three Squacco, 2 Purple Herons and several Sedge and Barred Warblers. Five more lifers!

Everywhere there were Great and Little Egrets, Gray Herons, Coots, Moorhens, Gadwalls, Mallards, Hooded Crows, Magpies and Black Kites. At 1:30 PM we headed out to a restaurant at one of the Lidos, but we had two more pieces of luck coming to us. On a small agricultural plot we spooked a Little Ringed Plover. Then coming across a marshy field a male Pallid Harrier, another balcan bird at its most westernmost outpost, glided into sight. This bird is smaller than our Northern Harrier with less white on the rump and without the black wing bars of the more common Montague's Harrier.

We ticked off two more lifers for a total of 20 in about 6 hours. And the pizza was excellent!

On the way back to Como we stopped at a reserve near Mantova at an old oxbow of the Po. The woodland chorus was unbelievable with probably some twenty species singing. Unfortunately a dinner commitment kept us from staying very long. But it is marked for a return visit.

Some logistical information:

We stayed in Ferrara, a lovely old ducal city, at an excellent bed and breakfast called the Locanda Borgonuovo. It is in Fodor's travel guide for Italy. The city has a great castle, good museums and a beautiful cathedral. Most visiting birders might do better staying in Ravenna because it is closer to the park. Rimini would also be a good choice because of all its accommodations. It's an Italian version of Myrtle Beach. There are several very good, multilingual internet sites covering both LIPU reserves and National Parks.

Club Needs You – Continued

via seasonal weekend meetings. But we know there are plenty of other good birding places around the Carolina's which can't be included in those meetings. And we would like you to lead a trip to them. It's not hard – pick a spot and date. Then let your regional representative [see page 5] know you are interested in leading a trip.

You don't have to be an expert birder. You just need to be an 'expert' about the place you are taking the group. The only hitch to this is you do need to plan for the event at least 5 months in advance because we have to have time to advertize in the newsletter.

Over the past few years CBC has offer a number of 'extra' trips throughout the year. Many of you have participated in the events. Now it's your turn host a day trip [or a week trip out of the area if you are so inclined] to help your fellow birders learn about new places to bird. Don't miss this opportunity to give back to the Club. It's also a great way to new birding friends.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB WINTER MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

January 25-27, 2002

Name: _____ Day Phone: _____

Address: _____ Evening Phone: _____

City: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____ Email: _____

Enclosed is a check for \$_____ for _____ member (\$10) registration(s) and/or _____ nonmember (\$20) registration(s).

Please include names not listed above: _____

____ This my [our] first time attending a CBC meeting.

Make checks payable to Carolina Bird Club & send to: CBC, 11 West Jones Street, Raleigh NC 27601-1029

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

CBC Fall Meeting — September 21 – 23, 2001

(Rooms may not be available after January 1, 2002.)

Name: _____ Day Phone: _____

Address: _____ Evening Phone: _____

City: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____ Email: _____

Enclosed you will find \$_____ (\$45.95 double occupancy bayside, or \$59.95 double occupancy oceanfront, plus 10% tax) as advance payment (first night) for a room reservation. We (I) will arrive _____ (date) and leave _____ (date).

Send this form with a check to: Comfort Inn Oceanfront South, 8031 Old Oregon Inlet Rd. Nags Head, NC 27959

Whooping Crane Celebration

The Chattanooga Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society will host a "Whooping Crane Celebration" recognizing the planned arrival of the cranes to Tennessee behind ultra-light planes this October.

"To celebrate the introduction of the world's most endangered crane into the flyway of wild sandhill cranes that pass through Tennessee, we will host a fundraiser on **Friday, October 26, 2001**, at 6:00 p.m. at the Chattanooga Choo Choo Imperial Ballroom," said TOS chapter president, Bonnie Johnson. The TOS event is in partnership with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to benefit the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation. The Foundation will use funds raised at the event to expand the crane educational outreach programs in the area and to enhance crane habitat at the Hiwassee and Yuchi refuges.

The evening will feature hors d'oeuvres, silent auction, Operation Migration (OM) video, and special guest speaker, John Christian. Christian is currently the Assistant Regional Director for Migratory Birds and State Programs for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and was instrumental in the formation of the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership that is committed to restoring a migratory flock of whooping cranes to the eastern United States.

Last year, captive raised sandhill cranes were led from natural nesting grounds in Wisconsin to wintering grounds in Florida by Operation Migration ultra-light planes in a similar fashion seen in the movie "Fly Away Home" featuring geese. All of the Operation Migration sandhill cranes safely made the return trip to Wisconsin. With that experimental project deemed a success, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service authorized the introduction of the endangered whooping cranes into the wild sandhill population flyway with OM pilots on point.

"We are very excited that the endangered whooping crane may make Tennessee part of their routine migration route and may use the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge as one of their migration rest stops. The sandhill cranes in this flyway have made an impressive impact in the Chattanooga and Birchwood communities as their numbers have increased each year. The whoopers will be a wonderful addition to the wildlife watching experience as the birds migrate through Tennessee," Johnson added.

Admission or a donation for the crane benefit is \$10.00 per ticket and is available by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Bonnie Johnson, Rt. 1, Box 487 B, Dunlap, TN 37327. Make checks payable to TOS. For information call David Aborn at 423-755-5236 or contact craneinfo@cs.com.

CBC News

At the Executive Committee retreat on August 11 President Van Atkins appointed the following members to committees.

Financial Advisory Committee - Bert Fisher, Len Pardue, Ben Smith, Patricia Tyndall, and Paula Wright.

Nominating Committee - Clyde Smith (chair), Jo Ann Martin, and Pete Worthington.

The nominating committee will present a slate of officers at the spring meeting.

Carolina Bird Club Officers

President

Van Atkins
2040 Church Creek Dr.,
Charleston, SC 29414
843-766-7000/729-0271
vatkins@awod.com

Vice Presidents

John Wright, Greenville, NC
Dick Blee, Brevard, NC
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SC Members-at-Large

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Gary Sowell, Hopkins, SC

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Len Pardue, Asheville, NC

Editor of *The Chat*

Bob Wood, Columbia, SC

Editor *CBC Newsletter*

Judy Walker, Charlotte, NC

Headquarters Secretary

Tullie Johnson

The CBC Newsletter is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc., the ornithological society of the Carolinas. CBC is a nonprofit corporation headquartered in Raleigh, NC. Founded in 1937 the membership open to anyone interested in birds, natural history and conservation. Members are encouraged to submit items of interest to the CBCNewsletter editor: Judy Walker, 7639 Farm Gate Dr., Charlotte, NC 28215 birdwalker@mac.com Submission deadlines are the 10th of January, March, May, July, September and November.

Submit membership applications and change of address to:

CBC Headquarters Secretary
11 W. Jones St.,
Raleigh, NC 27601-1029

CBC Newsletter is printed on 100% recycled paper with 60% post-consumer content.

CBC

Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

11 West Jones St.
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Nonprofit Organization
U. S. Post Office
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Permit No. 1654

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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Charlotte, NC

Matthew L. Cole
Cary, NC

Julie A. Ebanks
Cary, NC

Terry Lea Hamilton
Charlotte, NC

Dianne Henault
Hendersonville, NC

Linda and Charles Jones
Simpsonville, SC

Rosalind McClam
Lake City, SC

George and Diana Osbaldiston
Columbia, SC

Hilda M. Reese
Greer, SC

Life Member
Sidney Maddock
Buxton, NC



Deceased

J. Bowen
Knoxville, TN

Frank Greene
Greenville, SC

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RARE BIRD ALERT: 704-332-BIRD

WEB SITE: www.carolinabirdclub.org